ESN is Pursuing Four Key Development Strategies

Strategy 1 - Structure & Sustainability

Build a Sustainable Network and Support Structure for Entrepreneurs

Accomplishments in 2009
A. ESN Development - Developed a network of business development service providers and formulated a community vision to foster innovation and entrepreneurialism in the region. Nine organizations are engaged, and over 30 projects were identified with 13 being pursued.

B. EPIC Creation - Over $4,500 was secured by WIEDP to establish EPIC. A logo, website, and a 15 member club was created.

C. Entrepreneurship Center - City of Galesburg secured $75,000 to operate the EC at GREDA for an additional year.

Goals for 2010
1. Entrepreneurial Spirit Initiatives - Grow financial sponsorship and staff support to carry out the vision of entrepreneurial communities in West Central IL.
2. EPIC Membership - Grow membership from 15 to 20 and continue to host regular EPIC meetings.
3. Entrepreneurial Communities Sustainability - Apply for an USDA and/or EDA grant to continue the operations of the EC and carry out each strategy herein.

Strategy 2 - Culture & Promotion

Foster a Culture of Entrepreneurialism

Accomplishments in 2009
A. National Entrepreneurship Week - Launch the first NEWeek on Feb 2009 at the ETC and obtained proclamations from four counties and several municipalities.

B. Community Presentations - Made presentations at: Galesburg Chamber Breakfast, Workforce Investment Board, Monmouth Chamber, Monmouth Kiwanis Club, and Aledo Kiwanis Club.

Goals for 2010
1. National Entrepreneurship Week - Continue to promote and recognize the contributions on entrepreneurs throughout NEWeek and obtain proclamations from municipalities within the region.
**STRATEGY 3 - SERVICE & FINANCE**

Develop A Comprehensive Delivery System of Programs and Services that Encourages Entrepreneurialism and Innovation

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2009**

A. **Entrepreneurship Center** – Over 313 client consultations were provided which assisted with 8 business start-ups, 2 expansions, and creation/retention of 22 jobs. The EC helped to secure nearly $200,000 of financing for businesses.

B. **Market Analysis Reporting** – Added marketing analysis software for business planning assistance, now available at the EC.

C. **Business Innovation Grant Program** – The City of Galesburg established the BIG program in partnership with Carl Sandburg College. Over five businesses were awarded $36,500 from the City and $8,250 from CSC. They included: 1) Stone Alley Books, 2) Sweets Candy Shop, 3) Denim & Pearls, 4) Knox Engineering, and 5) The Flipple Co.

D. **Where to Go for What - Navigating Business Services Book** – U of I Extension assisted with the publication of business resource books for Knox and Warren Counties.

**GOALS FOR 2010**

1. **Entrepreneurship Center** – Continue to provide one-on-one business planning and technical assistance with entrepreneurs. Grow service by 10%.

2. **Green/Tech/Innovation Incubator** – Work with partners to establish an incubator to support innovated, high-growth, green/tech businesses.

3. **Business Innovation Grant/Loan Fund** – Make additional capital available through loans/grant for promising innovative companies with high job growth potential.

4. **Comprehensive Service Delivery** – Develop an ESN website and create an on-line regional service delivery system for entrepreneurs that show what business development services are available in the West Central Region.

5. **Business Opportunity Growth Program** – Place university and college students with private business owners to advance and/or explore business growth opportunities.

**STRATEGY 4 - EDUCATE, EMPOWER, ENGAGE**

Educate, Empower, and Engage Individuals, Organizations and Communities in Building the Entrepreneurial Spirit

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2009**


B. **Training** – Carl Sandburg College provides a variety of coursework and programs for entrepreneurs at all levels. Several online courses for small businesses are also available.

**GOALS FOR 2010**

1. **High School Business Plan Competition** – Initiate a business plan competition for high schools within the region.

2. **Camp CEO** – Sponsor at least two individuals to attend a camp for young entrepreneurs at Eastern Illinois University.

3. **Workshops** – Offer two workshops for entrepreneurs this Spring, and additional workshops in the Fall through Carl Sandburg College.

4. **Entrepreneurs On-Line Program** – Individual courses and a certificate program are offered online through Carl Sandburg College.

5. **Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE)** – A club for business students will continue at Carl Sandburg College that are interested in entrepreneurship.
ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT NETWORK

The ESN of West Central Illinois is a network of business support agencies (cities, counties, chambers, economic development corporations, and other public entities) that provide business development services and financial support to start-up, existing, and growing businesses.

The group was formed from an University of Illinois Extension Rural Community Development Initiative Grant which included the economic development organizations within Henderson, Knox, Mercer, and Warren County.

There are nine organizations providing staff support which include: The City of Galesburg, Galesburg Business and Technology Center, GREDA, Henderson County Economic Development Partnership, The University of Illinois Extension Mercer County, University of Illinois Extension Knox County, WIEDP/University of Illinois Extension Warren County, Western Illinois University Small Business Development Center, and Workforce Investment Board of Western Illinois.

Vision of ESN: “We are a network of service providers dedicated to the advancement of entrepreneurs, the promotion of innovation, and the development of an entrepreneurial culture.”

Mission of ESN: “To build an entrepreneurial culture and support system that educates, engages, and transforms individuals, organizations and communities to higher levels of innovation.”

ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT INVESTORS

The following organizations are proud to sponsor National Entrepreneurship Week and efforts of the Entrepreneurial Support Network:

Platinum - $1,500

City of Galesburg
Galesburg Regional Economic Development Association
Workforce Investment Board of Western Illinois

Gold - $1,000

Galesburg Business & Technology Center

Silver - $750

Bronze - $500

Galesburg Entrepreneurship Center
Illinois Small Business Development Center of WIU

Supporting - $250

Mercer Growth Organization (MERGO)
University of Illinois Extension WIEDP